



# Potting Shed News

The fortnightly newsletter of Cliveden Gardens



## Last of the summer colour

Despite the heatwave that seemed to last an age, the gardens have remained very colourful, especially our annual bedding displays. One of the highlights has to be the semicircle at the southern end of the Parterre (see left). This picture was taken by professional



photographer Mark Smeaton using a drone. The 6,200 red salvias with an edge of 1,300 *Senecio cineraria* 'Cirrus' show up so well, particularly when viewed from the terrace. Elsewhere the 11,000 mixed salvias in the Long Garden are still providing a rainbow of colour (see above) and will continue to do so for a few more weeks. By the time the next edition of PSN is published, we will have begun our biannual bedding changeover process which will see us remove the summer displays and prepare the ground to plant 14,800 bulbs and 37,600 bedding plants. These will include citrus-mixed polyanthus, deep orange pansies and yellow wallflowers as well as a selection of tulips. Garden centres have recently stocked up with spring bulbs—but remember that daffodils can be planted in September or October while tulips are best planted in November. Don't be too keen to get the latter in the ground as later planting can be a means of protection from disease.

## It's time for a haircut

August saw us undertake the annual task of cutting the yew topiary in the Long Garden (see right and below). Usually the process starts by using a spirit level and sheep shears to cut a straight line around the edge of the shape. Then, we continue using a hedge cutter powered by a back pack battery. It's a job that requires lots of patience (and a good eye!) and was completed within a fortnight.

The team will now move on to cut the box hedges on the Parterre which total around 2.5 miles. It's a job that takes several people a couple of weeks. Whilst cutting the box hedges around the gardens, we will be on the lookout for box tree caterpillar (see bottom right). This is a problem that we have been battling with at Cliveden for the past couple of years. Infestations of this caterpillar were first spotted in private gardens in 2011. Allegedly the invasion actually came from a



few miles down the road when a lady from Stoke Poges took a caterpillar to the Chelsea Flower Show and asked an entomologist to identify what was, back then, a new species. According to the RHS, by the end of 2014, the problem had become well established in parts of London and the Home Counties and has fast become a problem for gardeners to be aware of. Newly hatched caterpillars are bright green with black heads and older caterpillars can reach 4cm in length. They will eat box leaves, produce a webbing over the feeding areas and can completely defoliate an area. Certainly something for our local visitors to look out for.





## Colour around the garden

Although the sun may not now be shining as brightly and there has been a noticeable drop in temperature over the past few weeks, you'll still be able to spot plenty of late summer colour while walking around the garden. Firstly, we've picked two highlights from the cool side of the Forecourt borders. *Aster x frikartii* 'Wunder von Stäfa' (see far left) is a great Michaelmas daisy for extending the season, producing masses of light purple flowers from August onwards. Also look out for the semi-cactus *Dahlia* 'All Triumph' (2nd from left) standing stately with its spiky white flowers. Dahlias do such a great job at providing late summer colour from July all the way through until the first frosts and are relatively easy to look after (however, they are hungry plants and do like a regular liquid feed when in bloom.) Over in the Long Garden, one plant that never fails to please is *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *sullivantii* 'Goldsturm' (see 2nd from right). This 'black eyed Susan' with its golden yellow flowers likes a sunny spot and flowers between August and October. Finally in the Water Garden, look out for *Euonymus europaeus* 'Red Cascade' (see far right). It is native to European hedgerows and the wood was traditionally used to make spindles, hence the common name of 'spindle tree'.



## Who says wonky veg are ugly?!

We couldn't resist including a photo of these recently harvested carrots from the Walled Garden. (Just not sure they'd ever make it on to the supermarket shelves!)

## An interesting spot this week

This non-native *Impatiens capensis* (see right) has many common names including orange jewel weed, spotted touch-me-not and orange balsam. It is an annual native to North America and will grow



between 1 and 1.5 metres tall. It is not to be confused with its thug of a brother *Impatiens glandulifera*, commonly known as Himalayan Balsam and is a major weed problem that is invading gardens and river banks.

## New garden trainee

We are very pleased to welcome our new HBGTP (Historic and Botanic Garden Training Programme) trainee Ewa Krupa to Cliveden (see right). Originally from Poland, she has most recently been working down the road at Dorney Court in their garden centre. The programme is administered by English Heritage and is part funded by the National Lottery. Ewa will be with us until the end of August 2019 and in her spare time she enjoys samba dancing.



## Guided tours are back next month!

Get your diaries out and make a note that our free Tuesday tours will soon be back. Meet outside the Information Centre at 2pm every Tuesday in October. No need to book, but please do turn up early as places are limited to 18 on a first come, first served basis.